

Springside (Mathew Vassar Estate)
Academy Street
Poughkeepsie
Dutchess County
New York

HABS No NY-5489

HABS
NY

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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE NEW YORK	COUNTY DUTCHESS	TOWN OR VICINITY POUGHKEEPSIE
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) SPRINGSIDE		HABS NO. NY-5489
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE Mathew Vassar Estate		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) Academy Street		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1850-1852	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE) Andrew Jackson Downing	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) Built by Mathew Vassar (1792-1868), founder of Vassar College, as a country seat, Springside is unique in possessing the only two buildings which can be definitely attributed to Andrew Jackson Downing (1803-1892). Downing's plans and elevations for the cottage (NY-5489) and the stables (NY-5489-A) are now in the Vassar Library Collection.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE) Gothic Revival		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Board and batten on a stone and brick foundation		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) Originally rectangular in plan, measuring 38'5" x 28' (cottage). For floor plans see photographs NY-5489-10 and NY-5489-11.		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE Projecting central gable and truncated principal gables with barge boards.		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED)		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES Dormer windows and side balcony added to the cottage in the 20th century. The carriage house and barn were extensively damaged by fire on August 18, 1969.		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Private		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE Mathew Vassar originally bought the land on which the cottage and outbuildings stand in behalf of the Poughkeepsie Cemetery Committee. The Committee rejected the site and Vassar decided to engage A.J. Downing to landscape the grounds and build his country home. Springside is the last extant example of Downings work. Now a National Historic Landmark		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) Baldwin, Sarah L. "Mr. Vassar and the Hand of Taste," <u>Vassar Alumnae Mag.</u> , V, May 1955, p2-5. Lossing, Benson. <u>Vassar College and Its Founder</u> . 1867. Tatum, George. "Andrew J. Downing, Arbiter of American Taste," PhD. Diss., Princeton, 1950.		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Eleni Silverman, HABS Historian		DATE 5/84